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LECTURE OUTLINE

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INTRODUCTION TO THE THEORY OF MARXISM

I. Introduction.

A. Marxism consists of three elements.

1. A dialectical philosophy borrowed from Hegel.
2. A system of political economy from the classical school of British political economy.
3. A theory of state and revolution from French revolutionary tradition.

II. Philosophical basis.

A. The dialectical method.

1. Thesis, antithesis, synthesis.

B. The laws of the dialectic.

1. Transformation of quantity into quality.
2. Unity of opposites.
3. Negation of the negation.

C. Materialism.

1. Contrasted with idealistic concept.

D. Dialectical materialism.

1. As the only true, scientific explanation of reality.

E. Historical materialism.

1. The materialist interpretation of history explained in terms of the dialectic.
 - a. The basic conflicts of the dialectical process in human society operate in terms of changing production forces.
 - b. When production forces change--production relations change.

(1) Definitions.

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c. Examples: Marx's historical periods based on the economic forms of production.

(1) Primitive communal.

(2) Slave.

(3) Feudal.

(4) Capitalist.

(5) Socialist.

(6) Each stage is an advancement over preceding stage.

d. Social development as the result of changing production forces.

(1) Marxist concept of substructure and superstructure of society.

(2) Social development not affected by new rational principles; or new concepts of truth or justice.

F. The class struggle.

1. Derived from historical materialism.

2. Class based on exploiters and exploited.

3. Transition stage.

a. Dictatorship of the proletariat.

G. Critique of Class Struggle, Historical Materialism, Dialectic.

1. Criticism of these norms as a basis of "progress".

III. Political economy.

A. Labor theory of value.

1. Value of a commodity depends on the relative quantity of labor necessary for its production.

2. Marx "discovered" labor as the property common to all commodities.

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- a. Employer pays for labor power required by the worker to sustain himself--not labor hours.
- b. Marxian definition of labor.
- c. Contribution to value of raw materials, land, etc.
- d. Exchange value.
- B. Theory of surplus value.
 - 1. Source of capitalist profit.
 - a. Varies in proportion to amount of exploitation of worker.
 - 2. Example.
 - 3. Definitions of constant and variable capital and machinery.
 - a. Amount of profit varies according to proportion of variable to constant capital.
 - (1) Engels' extension and explanation of above.
- C. Deductions from theory of surplus value.
 - 1. Law of Capitalist Accumulation.
 - 2. Law of Concentration of Capital.
 - 3. Law of Increasing Misery.
 - a. Creation of industrial reserve army.
 - b. Theory of under consumption or over production.
- D. Lenin's Theory of Imperialist Capitalism.
 - 1. Transference of Marx's theories from national to international level.
- E. Summary of Marx's economic doctrine.
- F. Critique.
- IV. Theory of State and Revolution
 - A. The State.
 - 1. Marx's definition.

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2. Coercive functions.
3. As a manifestation of the superstructure.
- B. Necessity for revolutionary action.
 1. Revolution necessary though Communism is inevitable.
 - a. Revolution is the only means to destroy the bourgeois state.
 - b. Proletariat is the exploited class and fills the role of the antithesis in the dialectical process.
- C. Theory of Dictatorship of the Proletariat.
 1. Dictatorship of proletariat to:
 - a. Establish classless society.
 - b. Establish a dictatorship against the counter revolution.
 2. The Communist Party as the vanguard of the proletariat.
- D. Withering away of the State.
 1. When a classless society has been established.
 2. Highest stage of Communism.
 - a. From each according to his ability, to each according to his need.
- E. Critique.

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